

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CODEL O'NEILL

REFS A. TAIPEI 2442 B. TAIPEI 2482 C. TAIPEI 2483 D. TAIPEI 2491

1. SUMMARY . FROM OUR VIEWPOINT CODEL VISIT TO TAIPEI APRIL 17-19 WAS MOST SUCCESSFUL. CONGRESSMEN ACCOMPLISHED THEIR PURPOSES. ROC RECEIVED ENCOURAGEMENT FROM SIZE, IMPORTANCE AND BI-PARTISAN NATURE OF CODEL, AND US INTERESTS WERE PROMOTED THROUGH (FIRM BUT CAREFULLY PHRASED) REITERATION OF CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR THE ROC. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL O'NEILL VISITED TAIPEI APRIL 17-19 AT INVITATION OF LEGISLATIVE YUAN. VISIT WAS EXTREMELY SHORT, BUT CODEL NEVERTHELESS MANAGED TO SEE AND HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH KEY OFFICIALS. GROC MADE EXCELLENT PREPARATIONS FOR VISIT, AND REMAINED SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO MAKE LAST-MINUTE CHANGE IN SCHEDULE AT REQUEST OF CODEL.

3. FIRST OFFICIAL EVENT WAS ONE AND ONE-HALF HOUR EMBASSY/ MILITARY BRIEFING. IT WAS A LIVELY QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION DURING WHICH CONGRESSMEN SHOWED INTEREST IN WIDE RANGE OF SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS, ESPECIALLY BASIC QUESTIONS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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US AND ROC POLICY DIRECTION AND GROC BEHAVIOR.

4. CODEL CALLED ON VICE PRESIDENT YEN CHIA-KAN AND FOREIGN MINISTER SHEN CHANG-HUAN, AND VISITED LEGISLATIVE YUAN. CONGRESSMEN O'NEILL AND BROOMFIELD, ACCOMPANIED BY CHARGE, HAD PRIVATE MEETING WITH PREMIER CHIANG CHING-KUO, FOLLOWED BY BREAKFAST FOR CONGRESSMEN AND STAFF HOSTED BY PREMIER.

5. VICE PRESIDENT WAS ELOQUENT AS USUAL, ESPECIALLY IN DESCRIBING ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGERS. TOWARD THE END OF HIS DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, HE INJECTED UNCHARACTERISTIC BIT OF PROPAGANDA--AN ALLEGED CAPTURED PRC DOCUMENT (THE ONE GIVEN NY TIMES MAN JOE LLELYVELD--SEE TAIPEI 1996) DESCRIBING PRC MOTIVATIONS IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE US--WHICH SEEMED TO DETRACT FROM OVERALL FAVORABLE IMPRESSION CODEL RECEIVED FROM DISCUSSION WITH VP.

6. FOREIGN MINISTER WAS EQUALLY ELOQUENT, ALTHOUGH HIS REMARKS WERE LARGELY COUCHED IN TERMS OF IDEOLOGICAL ORTHODOXY--NO COMPROMISE WITH THE MAINLAND, NO NEGOTIATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS, NO FORMAL POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE FOR TAIWAN. FONMIN'S RATHER CANDID STATEMENT OF DISAGREEMENT WITH BASIC THRUST OF US POLICY TOWARD PRC STIMULATED SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN TO DEFEND USG POLICIES. HOWEVER THEY NOTED THAT DESPITE SUPPORT FOR US RAPPROCHMENT WITH PEKING AND CONSIDERABLE DIVERSITY OF VIEWS AMONG CODEL MEMBERS, ROC COULD COUNT ON CONTINUING US SUPPORT.

7. TO THEIR SURPRISE, PREMIER AVOIDED SERIOUS MATTERS DURING PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESSMEN O'NEILL AND BROOMFIELD. HE RESPONDED BRIEFLY TO QUESTIONS ABOUT JAPAN/ROC CIVIL AIR ISSUE(TAIPEI 2491), ROC ATTITUDE TOWARD "INDEPENDENCE", AND A FEW LESSER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. CLEARLY HIS MAIN DESIRE WAS TO EXTEND COURTESIES.

8. CONGRESSMAN O'NEILL DELIVERED AN APPROXIMATELY "766-MINUTE SPEECH DURING CODEL VISIT TO LEGISLATIVE YUAN. THIS SPEECH, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLUS HIS TOAST AT DINNER HOSTED BY CHINESE, HIS DEPARTURE STATEMENT, AND REMARKS MADE BY CONGRESSMEN O'NEILL AND BROOMFIELD AT A DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE WERE VERY WELL RECEIVED, AND THE EXPRESSIONS OF CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE ROC WHICH APPEARED IN THESE STATEMENTS WERE ENCOURAGING AND GREATLY APPRECIATED BY CHINESE HOSTS.

9. THE VISIT WAS WIDELY COVERED IN THE LOCAL MEDIA. THE

VARIOUS SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS (ABOVE) WERE DISTRIBUTED AS USIS PRESS RELEASES, AND WERE PRINTED IN MOST LOCAL NEWSPAPERS (REF, TELS).

10. FROM ROC STANDPOINT, VISIT WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. THEY OBVIOUSLY ATTACHED TOP IMPORTANCE TO DELEGATION, AND GAVE IT VIP TREATMENT. (FOR A BRIEF PERIOD IT WAS THOUGHT THAT MME. CHIANG KAI-SHEK WOULD RECEIVE THE GROUP, BUT BECAUSE OF MINOR INDISPOSITION, SHE WAS UNABLE TO DO SO.) THE SIZE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE GROUP WERE SEEN AS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT, UNDERLINING THE BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT FOR THE ROC IN THE US AND IN THE CONGRESS.

11. CODEL MEMBERS WERE EXPOSED TO MORE ORTHODOX POLITICAL DOGMA THAN THEY HAD ANTICIPATED (CAUSING A FEW RAISED EYEBROWS ABOUT OUR STRESS ON ROC'S FLEXIBILITY.) ROC IN TURN WAS EXPOSED TO A SKILLFUL EXPRESSION OF DIVERSE VIEWS ON POLITICAL MATTERS, ALL IN THE OVERALL CONTEXT OF BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD BOTH THE ROC AND THE PRC. WE FEEL THIS WAS MOST USEFUL AND INSTRUCTIVE.

12. THERE WAS GENERAL CONCERN AMONG MEMBERS OF THE CODEL AT THE TREND OF DEVELOPMENTS IN ROC-JAPAN AVIATION RELATIONS, AND THEY RAISED NUMEROUS QUESTIONS ABOUT GROC INTENTIONS. (REF D)

13. WE BELIEVE IT WAS A GOOD VISIT, A VIEW THE CONGRESSMEN APPEARED TO SHARE, AS WELL AS A WELCOME AND TIMELY REITERATION OF CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR THE ROC. GLEYSTEN

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